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commonweal

JOHN HORGAN

The Trouble In Ireland

MORALITY & ABORTION

an exchange

JOHN DUCORE
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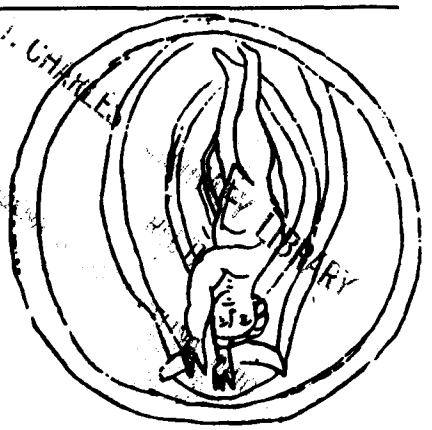

TAXING FOR EDUCATION

ISIDORE SILVER

END TO SWITZERLAND'S 'KULTURKAMPF'?

BRUCE VAN VOORST

POOR SCOTT AGAIN

SAUL MALOFF

RAYMOND A. SCH... /AK
GABRIEL GERSH o...
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NEWS & VIEWS

Emerging Catholic Youth

While authority in the church continues to preoccupy itself with the adult generations, youth continues to drift further from the old orthodoxies and from virtually all influence of the magisterium.

A recent *Minneapolis Tribune* poll indicated that while more Catholic than Protestant youths feel that abortion is morally wrong, about half of the Catholics disagreed with the church's moral position against abortion.

And a recent study by Msgr. George A. Kelly, holder of the Chair for the Study of Contemporary Catholic Problems at St. John's University, Long Island, shows that the religious lifestyle of Catholic youth has changed so drastically the past few years that the 1972 Catholic youth is almost unrecognizable alongside the Catholic youth of 1967.

The Kelly study profiles a new generation barely influenced by religious, parish or Eucharistic life; increasingly indifferent to religious observances (only 30 to 40 percent of today's high-school seniors attend Sunday Mass regularly compared to averages of 65 to 80 percent in 1967); and totally off-hand about traditional Catholic obligations, such as being "married in the church."

The new Bishop of Burlington, Vt., John A. Marshall, has listed identification with youth as the prime objective of his episcopacy, but he seems to be an exception. Authority, by and large, is remarkably casual about the drift of young people.

Perhaps authority thinks that youth's "search for meaning" will bring it full-circle back to the institution, particularly as youth matures and does the settling down that generations usually do at one point or another.

It could happen, of course. But authority's presumption could be a very large one. The new generation has broken the molds of the past so completely that it is reckless to presume tomorrows on the basis of yesterdays.

Thus the irony: the church could achieve all its current goals and lose a large hunk of the future, because its emphases omit the generation on whom the future depends. Unless there is a radical turnaround, official church authority can be sure of only one thing a decade and two from now: acres of empty pews.

Torture in Brazil

The torture of political prisoners in Brazil may well be on the decline, as the *New York Times* intimated on Jan. 31. But the Brazilian Bishops' Conference is not at all convinced.

The Conference has just protested anew against political tortures and cited four recent cases: those of two sociologists, Lucio Brito and Castelo Branco; of a priest, Gerson de Conceicao; and of a student, Andrew Campos. In the last case, Msgr. Ivo Lorscheider, secretary of the Conference, attested himself to the fact of the police torture.

In another communiqué, the Brazilian Bishops' Conference again raised a cry of alarm about the situation of the Indians in the country's virgin forests, who, the bishops declare, are threatened with complete extinction.

The bishops' worries are summed up in the following quote from an investigation undertaken by the church on the native regions of the Amazon: "Human rights are trampled under foot, and the Indians are victims of a slow cultural, and even biological, genocide."

The Chill from N.H.

The *Los Angeles Times'* D.J.R. Bruckner study of New Hampshire on the eve (almost) of the first Presidential primary of 1972 provides some sobering thoughts:

"There is something frightening about this campaign; what people willingly listen to and what they say suggest that the great institutions of the United States are being rejected. The mood is much more unnerving than it was in the Congressional campaign of 1966 or the Presidential race of 1968. There was more violence then, but the notion you were impressed with in the streets was that most people were looking for a comfortable common solution satisfactory to everyone. I am not sure people share that desire any more.

"It is true that people seem unfortunately inured to political lying by the government, but that is hardly a commendation of government. The candidates here who argue that the government cannot be believed may have uncovered the richest, but most dangerous issue of them all. People do not really expect to be told everything an Administration is doing, but you find now a fear that the old restraints imposed on leaders by a respect for the people have been broken, that political leaders on all sides feel free to deceive. That skepticism extends to the press, colleges, corporations, banks, unions. Among some veterans you meet it; it extends to the military.

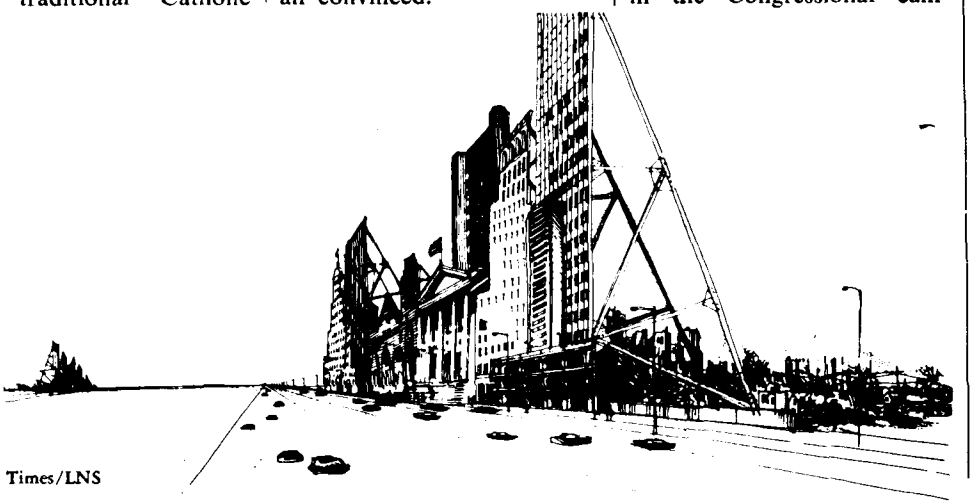
"The response of the Muskie campaign is the slogan 'Trust Muskie.' That trust might grow in time. But it is not there now, nor is it with any other candidate. So far, people's feelings are running much deeper than the political feelings of the candidates."

Odds and Ends

— From Senator Frank Church's light-hearted "Salute to Congress" dinner talk: "Henry Kissinger has already been to China twice. Recently, Ron Ziegler went over. Next week, I understand, Ehrlichman and Handleman are going. Frankly, I'm worried. The last time so many Germans went into a country, World War II broke out!"

— The *Washington Post's* description of the Holy Cross (Mass.) basketball squad: "The hairiest team to be seen in these parts since the House of David."

JOHN DEEDY



Modern Times/LNS

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CORRESPONDENCE

JVL and the War

Upper Montclair, N.J.

To the Editors: I was rather puzzled by your statement about candidates who condemned the war on moral grounds for religious reasons [Jan. 21]. First of all, your list of candidates was conspicuous for its omission of John Lindsay, who opposed the war as early as any of the people on your list. Was he omitted because he did not do so for religious reasons? And, if so, does that really matter, when he clearly condemned it for moral reasons?

Your omission is doubly odd when you include Edmund Muskie as one of the war's opposers—when he was still debating a public statement against the war as late as November 1969. Is his recent conversion considered superior to Lindsay's and equal to McGovern's, Kennedy's and McCarthy's much earlier opposition to the war because he was moved by religious conviction? If so, his religious convictions seem to operate as slowly as his well-known capacity for making up his mind.

HARVEY S. TURNER

Black Speech

Lexington, Mass.

To the Editors: I'm amazed that letter-writer Roland Laird [Jan. 14] could infer from my article, "Black Children, Black Speech" [Nov. 19] that I consider Black English "a language of equal dignity," "a noble dialect," and "good usage," since in the article I pointed out that Black English is not a separate language at all but a separate dialect, not a series of errors in Standard English but a nonstandard variety of English, and not a dialect that is respected but one that is scorned.

It is not the business of a linguist to decide what dialect is "noble" or "has dignity," anyway; society decides that. The linguist merely records society's decisions and explains their consequences.

It's unfortunate that Mr. Laird, like

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EUROPE UNITED

A Napoleon, a Hitler, any military leader who tries to change the shape of Europe by force is certain to command lengthy consideration in the history books. Jean Monnet, Paul-Henri Spaak, Robert Schuman and other even less known fathers of a united Europe will probably remain more anonymous, but the impact of their work and their dreaming is likely to be more long-lasting. The recent entry of Britain, Ireland, Denmark and Norway enlarges the membership of the Common Market from its original number of six to ten. If the entry of these new members is ratified by popular vote, the enlarged community will automatically become one of the world's great economic powers. Its population will number about 257 million, larger than either the United States or the Soviet Union. The area's gross national product in 1970 was estimated at $637 billion, as compared with $933 billion for the United States. Finally, and very significantly, the new community will account for 41 percent of world trade—far more than the United States, the Soviet Union and Japan combined.

As matters now stand, therefore, the Common Market community will be one of great economic power—and this fact alone is of crucial importance —although without political unity and workable centralized institutions. Such larger goals are not absent from the minds of its founders, however, as evidenced by Prime Minister Edward Heath's remarks at the signing of what has come to be called the Treaty of Brussels, the formal ratification of the membership of the four new nations. Said Mr. Heath in discussing the Europe of the future: "It must be a Europe in which we shall be working for the progressive relaxation and elimination of tension between East and West, a Europe alive to its great responsibilities in the common struggle of humanity for a better life. This ceremony marks an end and also a beginning: an end to divisions which have stricken Europe for centuries. A beginning of another stage in the construction of a new and greater united Europe." This is the dream of a united Europe, a dream long hampered by President de Gaulle's insistence on barring Britain from membership in the Common Market but now realized. It would be unrealistic, certainly,

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to expect the Common Market nations to take giant steps toward some kind of political unity immediately or even in the very near future; the fact that it was necessary to use eight languages in preparing the official treaty of membership at Brussels is reminder enough of the differences that exist. Nonetheless, steps toward closer and closer political relationships are almost inevitable, if the economic machinery is to work half-way efficiently. Thus there is already scheduled for next fall a ten-nation summit conference which will focus on three points, two non-economic: monetary and economic union, political cooperation and relations with the United States and other countries. What may ultimately emerge from the Common Market economic arrangement, clearly, is the surrender of a certain amount of national sovereignty by European nations in order to create a new and organic superpower, one that would tend to balance East and West and one that would produce more steel and autos and sail more merchant ships than either of the present superpowers. On the economic level, the birth of this superpower will profoundly affect the world's trade relations—a fact foreseen by President Kennedy exactly a decade ago in a historic speech proclaiming our interdependence with Europe. Recognition of this fact and of the need to destroy economic barriers between nations is essential now, but here Administration efforts in recent months to protect the American economic condition at whatever cost to friends and allies will not help matters. What is needed, rather, is creative thinking that will forge new institutional links between the new Europe and America, even at some cost to our own sovereignty—institutions that would be flexible enough to include our major partner in the Far East, Japan. Such creativity is easier described than accomplished, obviously, and no doubt the development of a united Europe will pose certain immediate and annoying problems for the United States. Nevertheless, the emergence of a united Europe is the fulfillment of a noble dream and something that will in the long run be good for Europe and the world.

NEXT WEEK

RALPH MCINERNY discusses the priest in literature for Religious Book Week:

"The best stories record human failure, or so I think, and the best novels about priests tell the story of one who has not lived up to the vocation to which he has been called. Here failure cannot be construed as being a victim of injustice, real or imagined; it cannot be a lack of rectitude, the mere making of mistakes. What one wants is evil and sin and the threat of damnation."

A DECENT DEED

The granting of parole to Father Daniel Berrigan, effective February 24, is a decent deed flawed only by the fact that it should have been extended sooner and is probably being given now for political rather than humanitarian reasons. Daniel Berrigan is in delicate health, and the last thing federal officials must want on their hands is a peace martyr.

Still, parole has been extended, and the occasion must be regarded unqualifiedly as one of joy and of gratitude: joy for Daniel Berrigan; gratitude to all who are instruments of his release. This means gratitude not only to the Berrigan attorneys; not only to individuals like Congressman William Anderson and Jesuit Provincial Superior Robert Mitchell, whose testimony at the parole hearing was strategic—but also to those government authorities who had the great good sense to concede that nothing of justice or honor was served by keeping Daniel Berrigan further incarcerated. One hesitates to read too much into their actions, but it is interesting, if not instructive, that letters supporting release were sent to the U.S. Parole Board by the judge who presided over the trial and imposed sentence on Dan Berrigan, by two federal presecutors in the case, and by the Baltimore County prosecutor, who conducted the concurrent state-level prosecution.

Beyond the fact that Daniel Berrigan will reside with Father Mitchell, and teach and write at Woodstock, the Jesuit institution in New York City, the details of his parole are as yet unspecific. There is, for instance, uncertainty as to how much traveling will be allowed Berrigan beyond New York before August 2, 1973, the terminal date of his full prison sentence.

Whatever the parole terms, however, it is to be hoped that Daniel Berrigan will be free to reorganize his life and his witness without unnecessary burdens from the fame that is now his. When Daniel Berrigan went to prison on August 11, 1970, it was generally felt that, with his visibility lowered, he would settle into an anonymity. Quite the opposite proved the case; Daniel Berrigan emerges from jail as a figure of near-mythological dimensions, not only to the Catholic resistance, but to segments of the general commuity—a moral Joe Namath, in one associate's words.

This could cause its problems, particularly if admirers of Daniel Berrigan create a circus around the man or, at the other extreme, enter into an idolatrous game of saint-watching. Dan Berrigan should be spared this. There are such differences of tonality between individuals and myths, human beings and saints that to confuse one with the other could so alter relationships as to insulate anyone from essential human interactions. That no one wants, least of all those of serious mien who wish to respond to Daniel Berrigan as one whose prophetic life-style has continuing meaning in their lives.

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END OF SWITZERLAND'S 'KULTURKAMPF'

RETURN OF THE JESUITS

Before there was a CIA, meddling in the international affairs of other countries was usually ascribed to the Society of Jesus, which is how the Swiss constitution of 1848 happens to contain provisions banning the Jesuit order. The *Verbot* was written into the constitution and later, in 1874, drawn even more sharply, as a reaction to the part the order was then popularly supposed to have played in provoking the 1847 "Sonderbund" insurrection of Catholic cantons in Switzerland's brief secessionist war.

Finally, after decades of abortive attempts, it looks as though this historical anachronism is going to be removed. At the turn of the year the Swiss government finally approved a "Message" concerning the elimination of Articles 51 and 52 of the constitution. The message itself was published on January 20, resulting in a national referendum probably early in 1973.

The irony is that modern historical studies, notably by the Jesuit Ferdinand Stroble, and, more recently, a book-length inquiry by Protestant historian Werner Kage, commissioned by the government to review the Jesuit issue, cast serious doubt on the Jesuit-involvement thesis. Most authors conclude that local political factors were much more decisive.

Nonetheless, although the constitution has been amended some fifty times since the last total revision in 1874, the ban still stands as the last relic of the "kulturkampf" and a continuing taint on the religious freedom of the nation's 42 percent Catholic population. Additionally, the *Verbot* is one of the major remaining impediments to the government's adhering fully to the European Convention on Human Rights.

The recent, most promising, effort to lift the ban began in 1955 when the then Swiss president, Ludwig von Moos, a Catholic from the small canton of Obwald, declared in an impassioned speech that abolition of the ban was the "only way Swiss Catholics can shed the impression of being second-class citizens." Von Moos subsequently became a major spokesman for the cause. "Things moved slowly," he reflected this week, "but the atmosphere has improved."

The success of the movement, however, is by no means assured. Religious fervor has generally abated in Switzerland, but relations are sensitive. The Pope's "Swiss Guard" notwithstanding, for instance, Switzerland has no ambassador to the Vatican, though there is a Nuncio in Bern. There is considerable religious intolerance in certain far-out Protestant sects, mostly in the west, which are actively campaigning against Jesuit reinstatement. As one of their handouts puts it, "Thanks to the ban, we in Switzerland have known neither Jewish deportations nor concentration camps. The ban on the Jesuits is a part of democracy. Give the Jesuits full freedom, and real freedom will disappear." The Jesuit objective, warns the brochure, "is the destruction of the Reformation."

On the other hand, the lifting of the ban is widely supported in many evangelical circles, including the nation's evangelical "Kirchenbund," league of churches, and its internationally prominent ecumenical leader, Pastor Vogelsangor of Zurich's Frauenmuenster.

Yet observers are by no means sure that a referendum would pass. "There are no prominent persons opposing it," says scholar Mario von Galli, editor of *Orientierung*, "but I wouldn't want to bet on the outcome." Says Hanno Helbling, religion editor for the *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, "the Jesuits are still a sensitive topic in this country." "A lot of people who wouldn't say so publicly will vote secretly against it in the ballot booth." And, curiously, or maybe not so curiously, there's an unmeasurable opposition within Catholic circles, particularly the Benedictine and Dominican orders.

It's debatable just how much difference a lifting of the verbot would mean. The 1848 ban specifically forbids the Society of Jesus from land ownership, preaching and officiating in churches, but the farmers never thought of such an unofficial teaching medium as radio. Additionally, Swiss authorities have been tolerant in applying the regulations. Nearly 120 Jesuits live and work in Switzerland, mainly counseling in theological seminaries (though there is no Jesuit seminary and Swiss novices go to Vorarlberg in Austria). In several recent instances authorities have looked the other way when Jesuits filled in as part-time teachers at Catholic institutions.

Curiously, too, a fine Jesuit-edited fortnightly review, *Orientierung*, produced since 1944 in Zurich by the "Apologetisches Institute" is highly valued among Catholic intellectuals and has a circulation of some 20,000. It slips in under the rule that scientific and intellectual activities are permitted.

Ironically, neither the lifting of the Jesuit ban nor last year's constitutional amendment finally giving women the right to vote in federal elections ends the tiny nation's headaches with constitutional inequities. Article 25b still prohibits the bleeding of animals before slaughter, which means that all kosher meat available in Switzerland has to be imported.

BRUCE van VOORST

(*Bruce van Voorst is the Middle-European correspondent for a national newsweekly magazine.*)

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WOMEN AND THE 'FEMINIST ETHIC'

PETER STEINFELS

THE TENDENCY for articles on abortion to approach their subject obliquely is understandable. A blunt confrontation of the question—whether, for example, the hundreds of thousands of acts performed legally in the state of New York are or are not the taking of innocent human life —seems more than rational discourse can easily bear. So we purportedly limit ourselves to one or another aspect of the issue, hoping all the while, I suspect, to establish a tone and direction for the entire discussion. Thus Gordon Zahn describes how "A *Religious Pacifist* Looks at Abortion" (*Commonweal,* May 28, 1971). Richard Stith sets forth "A *Secular* Case Against Abortion *on Demand*" (*Commonweal,* November 12, 1971). Mary Daly links "Abortion and Sexual Caste" (*Commonweal,* February 4, 1972).

The heart of this last article, as I read it, is this: (1) abortion is more complicated than murder; (2) laws which have tried to reflect this complexity with precision in the legislation itself have proved in practice to be discriminatory and unavailing in reducing illegal abortions; (3) therefore, abortion should not be a matter of law at all but left to the individual conscience of the decision-maker most closely involved, the pregnant woman.

Now there are several unclear points in this formulation. Does the author include even laws like New York's among unsatisfactory reforms, in which case she is wrong that such statutes are discriminatory and ineffective against illegal abortions? Does she literally and unqualifiedly call for complete withdrawal of the law from this area, as some women's rights groups have done, so that, for instance, a woman could decide to destroy and abort a fetus even in the last months of a pregnancy for any reason at all, theoretically even on the day before she was due to give birth?

But setting aside the question whether Ms. Daly is arguing for no legislative controls on abortion whatsoever or for a law like New York's —essentially abortion-on-demand by women in the first six months of pregnancy— the core of her argument remains. It is an argument which others have made on different grounds. Some argue, for example, that public opinion simply does not support strict anti-abortion statutes: even two-thirds of the Catholic population appears to approve legal abortions if the child might be deformed. Such laws are thus left unenforced, while laws that establish complicated systems of distinguishing between permissible and impermissible abortions do indeed suffer from the disabilities Ms. Daly points to: they discriminate and they fail to accomplish one of their primary aims, eliminating illegal abortions. The legal alternative, then, is a law like New York's, or no law at all.

What distinguishes Mary Daly's thesis is the feminist foundation she has given it. That is, in explaining what complexities should deter us from assimilating abortion to murder, or in suggesting the unfair and unworkable character of "moderate" regulations, she adverts not, say, to some aspect of embryology, but to the situation of women in our society. It is the sexual caste system, subordinating women and veiling their experience and needs, which according to Ms. Daly allows standard anti-abortion arguments and laws to appear cogent and plausible. As this caste system is dismantled, a "feminist ethic" of "courage to confront ambiguity" will emerge in conflict with the old "ethic of patriarchal authoritarianism."

Ms. Daly's assertions deserve close examination, to begin with because they are in part so obviously true. How could the attitude of Roman Catholicism toward abortion possibly have developed without being affected by the sexual caste system in which, and through which, this development took place? Yet the full connection between "the experience and needs of women" and anti-abortion positions is not all that clear, at least not to me. Nor is the connection between the experience of women and "feminist ethics" without complications.

Let us start with the first point. Mary Daly writes: "Essentially women are saying that because there is ambiguity surrounding the whole question and because sexually hierarchical society is stacked against women, abortion is not appropriately a matter of criminal law." Now it is true that *some women* may be saying that. It is true, obviously, that *Ms. Daly* is saying that. But by all the evidence we have available—a good deal—*women* are not saying that.

A year ago, Judith Blake published a study of opinion polls on the legalization of abortion for various reasons ("Abortion and Public Opinion: the 1960-1970 Decade," *Science,* February 12, 1971). These polls, taken over the '60s, revealed that approval of different forms of legalized abortion steadily increased. But among the findings which surprised Ms. Blake were that, first, the general opposition to "elective abortion" (the category closest to what Ms. Daly claims "women are saying") remained very high— about 80 percent of the white population—and that, second, no matter what the category of legalized abortion proposed, women expressed more disapproval than men. This was true when one considered abortion to safeguard the mother's health as well as selective abortion. This was true whether one compared Catholic women and men, non-Catholic women and men, college-educated women and

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THE TROUBLE IN IRELAND

JOHN HORGAN

The British Army pursues a tough and ruthless policy

Ireland today is full of people who, like the priests of ancient Rome, are busy examining the entrails to see what the future holds. The entrails, however, are our own. In the South as well as in the North, the political tremors are a recurring reminder that democracy is built on very shaky foundations. The degree of introspection is intense: less than a month before the Taoiseach signed the Common Market treaty on behalf of the Irish Republic, a national newspaper editor could write about 1972 as the year in which Ireland would have to face harsh realities, without once mentioning the harsh economic reality of competition with the giants of European industry. At a time when unemployment in the Republic is higher than it has been for decades, the North is still a greater issue than jobs.

In the North, the situation has deteriorated further. Belfast is dying on its feet. The I.R.A. Provisionals and the British Army stand toe to toe, slugging it out desperately in a battle that neither side can really win, while the city crumbles around them. It is not a glorious struggle. The sensibilities of the observer, are so numbed from the recurrent outrages on one side or the other—a fifteen-year-old boy with a plastic gun is shot dead by the Army; a Protestant bus-driver about to give evience in a bus hijacking case is killed by three armed men in his own house—that the question of who started it becomes almost irrelevant. [This article was written before the killing of 13 civilians by British paratroopers in Derry.—Editors.] The Army is clearly enjoying its job. In spite of the danger involved—or perhaps because of it—recruitment in the regiments involved has never been healthier. The Provisionals, for their part, are convinced that only by keeping up the pressure can they contribute to a final solution to the Irish problem. As their best men are picked off or interned, their actions become wilder, their rhetoric more lurid. It is difficult to avoid the impression that we are not far from the day when every man with a .303 or a stick of gelignite in his satchel will be his own Chief of Staff.

On the Protestant side, there is a taut discipline, broken only very occasionally by sudden and probably unauthorized acts of vicious retaliation. This will obviously continue to be the case for as long as the effective confrontation is between troops and I.R.A. But the leaders of the Protestant working class are also alert to the possibility of any weakening on the part of the Stormont Government, or of any further incursion by Westminster into the affairs of Northern Ireland. Developments of this kind could rapidly bring about confrontation of a different kind—between armed Protestants and the troops, or even between the Protestants and the Royal Ulster Constabulary. The Protestant working class is not particularly concerned about looking for friends, as long as it can identify its supposed enemies.

The Army strategy is simple enough: reduce the violence to what Mr. Maudling, the British Home Secretary, described in a memorable phrase as an "acceptable" level. If a number of innocent people are killed or wounded in the process, that's too bad: they are casualties of the overall situation. It is a tough and ruthless policy, which, after all, is what one would expect of an army.

The Provisional I.R.A. strategy is more complex, but basically it consists in keeping up the pressure at all costs in order to bring British public opinion to the point where the Westminster Government will decide, with whatever good grace it can muster, to wash its hands

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of the whole affair, and throw Northern Ireland into the lap of the Republic. The introduction of internment by the Stormont Government has been an important factor in this strategy. It reinforced the I.R.A. base in the Catholic areas at a time when its hold over the Catholic population had probably started to slip, and has contributed in no small way to the present polarization of the community as a whole.

Insofar as the Provisional I.R.A. activities have been successful in provoking the introduction of internment, and in alarming British public opinion about Ireland generally, they may be said to have contributed in an important way to the growing possibility of Irish reunification. As more and more people are locked up, the British Government feels increasingly impelled to take some political initiative that will contribute to the normalization of politics in the area, and allow the Social Democratic and Labor Party to come off the fence and back into Parliament. In Northern Ireland itself a noticeable proportion of the Protestant middle class, sickened and alarmed by the continuing violence, have begun—rather to their own surprise—to think of a united Ireland as a possible alternative to the present horror. They have, perhaps, little clear idea of what a united Ireland would actually be like, but they have at least got the message that it would be a country from which the threat of I.R.A. activity had been removed.

This shift of attitude on the part of the two influential components of the drama—the Westminster government and the Protestant middle class—could be crucial in creating the conditions in which Irish unity becomes a probability instead of just a possibility. And it is true to say that the Provisional I.R.A. campaign has been, directly or indirectly, largely responsible for this. But the price that is being paid is a terrible one—not just in terms of death and destruction, although these are real enough, but in terms of the growing isolation and alienation of the Protestant working class.

The gun, in other words, may eventually force a solution, but if it does it will be a solution which will give rise to further long-term problems. The way in which attitudes have been hardening in the Northern Protestant working class over the past eighteen months cannot be ignored. It can be diplomatically avoided, perhaps even militarily confronted, but it cannot easily be eradicated. It would persist, even in a united Ireland, as a constant source of frustration and discontent, at the very least equivalent to that experienced by Northern Catholics in the decades since Partition. This is a problem—and it is one which is acknowledged as such even by the "Official" I.R.A.—to which the Provisionals have no real solution. Worse than that, it is a problem which they have in large part helped to create.

In the Republic, the position is no less complicated: all the three main parties are divided, to varying degrees, on the Northern question. Mr. Lynch's government, remarkable not so long ago for its almost Stalinist unity in the lobbies, has become a loose coalition of hard-line dissidents (some of them have been expelled from the party but there are a few more left inside) and confused moderates; Labor is split between the constitutionalist approach of Conor Cruise O'Brien and the rather more militant stance of some of its rural members; and Fine Gael, too, is the scene of a more or less open division between people whose main concern is about the effect that I.R.A. violence in the North is having on the Unionist population, and those whose concern is the role being played by the British Army and the Westminster government.

The main question at issue, in effect, is whether the Northern Catholics have what is known as the right to defend themselves. Assent to this vague and emotive principle is often allowed to obscure the frequently ambiguous type of "defense" tactics adopted by the I.R.A. Provisionals, involving as they do the killing of unarmed policemen and the wounding or even killing of innocent civilians. At its most reasonable, this argument takes the form that it is permissible to reply to the institutional violence of the Unionist power structure through an armed guerrilla movement. At its least reasonable, it is vengeance, pure and simple, thinly disguised with the trappings of nineteenth-century nationalism.

It is, however, a way of thinking that has a profound attraction for a large segment of the Republic's population. This has been clearly shown by the initial success of Aontacht Eireann, the breakaway party formed by former Fianna Fail Minister Kevin Boland, in attracting new members. In a general election situation, this party, as well as Sinn Fein (which has announced its intention of contesting the next elections) stand to take valuable votes away from the ruling party, even if they do not actually manage to win many seats themselves. They feel about the North very much like the average British conservative feels about Rhodesia: the Northern Catholics, like the white Rhodesians, are a beleaguered minority, and as such are entitled to aid and comfort in their struggle. This is a conservative attitude, and it fails to examine the real issues underlying the conflict, or to apportion the blame realistically, but it still has a powerful electoral pull.

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It is also true to say that the violence in the North has provoked a counter-reaction in the South from people who, in a confused but sincere way, have begun to re-examine the whole history of violence in Irish politics, and to conclude that it has almost always created more problems than it has solved. For these people, the only form of unity which will ultimately work is a unity based on consent, not on coercion—political or military—and on the sort of changes in Southern Irish society that will make it more attractive to the Northern Protestant. At one extreme, this attitude shades into out-and-out pacifism. At the other, it accepts a certain degree of political force as an element in the solution to any political problem. What they have in common is a deepening realization of the inadequacy of the traditional Southern attitudes towards the North, and particularly towards the Northern Protestants, together with a recognition that Southern society, in its present form, is by no means a universal mirror of justice and virtue.

At first sight it seems as if both moderates and hard-liners, North and South, are agreed on the end—a united Ireland—and disagree merely on the means. There is, however, more to it than that. For too many people—as for too many theologians—unity is an end in itself, a territorial rather than a communal concept. The vision of Irish unity appears as an ideal to be fulfilled, and little more: and the importance of this ideal justifies the means used to achieve it. For others, the cost is too high: better to postpone unity, even into the relatively distant future, rather than to have it forced upon a recalcitrant and alienated minority amounting to almost a quarter of the population of the whole island. At a time when everything is in such a state of flux, this may seem a cowardly and even unIrish attitude to adopt, but it is arguably a realistic one.

The fundamental problems of the area that is now Northern Ireland will ultimately only be solved by the people of that area itself, and the tragedy today is that —despite all the maneuvering at diplomatic and constitutional levels—these people are now farther apart from each other than they have been at any time in recent history. Nobody can rule out the possibility of Irish unity in the near future, given the ways things are going. But anyone who thinks that this will solve the Irish problem is suffering from romantic delusions. The Irish problem will only be solved when the Irish people, and not just the physical territory of the island, are re-united, and the only radical standard against which the actions and statements of today can be measured is the degree to which they contribute to this.

There are, in effect, two separate questions. The first is the impossibility of relying on a campaign of violence to force a million or so unwilling Protestants into a united Ireland. The second is that of ending a situation in which the democratic majority in Northern Ireland have, with the introduction of internment, finally divested themselves of the last shred of moral justification for staying in power.

The two questions *can* be related: the creation of a united Ireland would obviously involve the end of the Stormont administration, for example, and this is what many people believe to be the only long-term solution. The South needs the North, just as much as the North needs the South. But until that day comes several options remain open. The important thing to remember is that any option which does not include the abolition, or at least the suspension, of Stormont stands very little chance of success. The Northern Ireland parliament itself is an anomaly, but its greatest usefulness has been that it has enabled the other parliament at Westminster to shelve its fundamental responsibilities in the area. That day can be postponed no longer.

SISTER MAURA, S.S.N.D.

FORMER STUDENT

He has left your
pride for the third
time. You tell me
that, fingerprinting
the memory
of the pulpy
miscarriage; the
switchblade-furnished
rooms, that other
child you held once
before adoption
took over.

You let the screen
of your hair fall
forward; tighten
your thighs to the
vise of cheap skirt.
Your voice winters
with weariness
as you explain
what love is not
and tell my
love to listen.

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TAXING FOR EDUCATION

ISIDORE SILVER

Can the courts compel the state to provide adequacy of treatment as well as equality of treatment?

The day before Christmas, Texas' proud and rugged citizenry received a most unusual (and unwelcome) gift from a three-judge federal court sitting in that state. The panel held that the Texas property tax scheme for financing of public education violated the Equal Protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution in that students residing in poorer school districts received fewer per-capita funds than their wealthier votaries. In essence, that decision—coming four months after a similar landmark ruling by the Supreme Court of California in *Serrano v Priest*—indicates that the American judiciary has not yet relinquished the task of social reconstruction begun in 1954 by the United States Supreme Court under Earl Warren. The dimensions of that reconstruction are only beginning to be dimly perceived, and a brief analysis of the *Serrano* case is essential to understand the direction it is likely to take.

Although *Serrano* contains a lengthy opinion (befitting the magnitude of the issues in the case) the California Supreme Court in the opening paragraph quickly stated and resolved the fundamental question:

> Recognizing as we must that the right to an education in our public schools is a fundamental interest which cannot be conditioned upon wealth, we can discern no compelling state purpose necessitating the present method of financing.

Finding rather easily that the expenditure per pupil in the state's elementary schools ranged from $407 to $2586, the Court concluded that the system was unjust and unconstitutional (for technical reasons, the decision is not a final one).

It noted, with ironic appreciation, that affluent school districts "can provide a high quality education for their children while paying lower taxes" and overrode arguments about the public interest in "localizing" education by observing that local control and administration need not be wed to local financing. Even though the state argued that taxpayers willing to spend more for their children's education should be able to exercise that option, the "system" actually contradicted that unexceptional goal, for

> As a practical matter districts with small tax bases simply cannot levy taxes at a rate sufficient to produce the revenue that more affluent districts reap with minimal tax efforts.

What gives the decision its intriguing potential is the rationale, a rationale potentially applicable to numerous other areas of state activity, a rationale which may give citizens constitutional rights to demand adequate state (and federal) expenditures for essentially public services. The Court utilized a Natural Law concept of the rights of citizens in a democracy—to start with, the right to an education—to compel the state to act in such a manner as to insure equality of treatment. Having discovered—or in modern jurisprudential terms, discerned —that fundamental right, the Court then asked whether (a) it could be abridged in the name of a valid and "compelling" state interest and (b) whether that interest —in this case, the presumed virtues of "local" education—could not be vindicated by means less destructive of the right to equal treatment. It found neither this interest nor the means used, unequal expenditures, to be compelling.

Both this concept and the analysis are potentially applicable not only to other municipal services, such as fire and police, but to a wide range of state activities, welfare and pollution-abatement among them, not commonly conceived of as "rights." As the task of social reconstruction—in a uniquely American context, involving as it does an indirect redistribution of wealth—becomes more defined, equality of treatment may well be supplemented by a due process concept of adequacy of treatment. When—and if—that happens, a unique and formidable experiment in "social engineering" will be at hand.

To be sure, the *Serrano* court sought to limit the rationale by isolating education as a "fundamental" right by noting that the property tax law was questioned not because of the inequality of revenue raising but because of the evident (and admitted) disproportion of financial expenditure. The limitation, at least on the first point, is lame and unconvincing:

> While police and fire protection, garbage collection and street lights are essentially neutral in their effect on the individual psyche, public education actively attempts to shape a child's personal development in a manner chosen not by the child or his parents but by the state.

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A citizen out for an evening walk or balefully eyeing the trash on the street or breathing fetid air may wonder whether his "individual psyche" is not being affected by certain public decisions "in a manner chosen by the state." No, future courts building from *Serrano* will have to decide just what "fundamental" services and activities, beyond education, are expected to be provided by the state and determine the hard questions of whether the state, in providing these, is doing so equitably and adequately.

Despite the court's attempts to delimit its decision, we must recognize that the ripples will spread and expand. Indeed *Serrano* itself is another shock from the tidal wave caused by the landmark Supreme Court decision in *Brown* v *Board of Education of Topeka* in 1954. The decision itself pays homage to *Brown*'s eloquent appraisal of education as an essential to both personal fulfillment and a freely functioning democratic society. Just as the limited language of *Brown* apparently requiring desegregation only of public schools has been expanded in numerous Supreme Court decisions (and Civil Rights and Housing Acts) to include virtually all public racial segregation, so the language of *Serrano* will be amplified to include numerous "fundamental" rights. In that sense *Serrano* is as much a landmark case as *Brown*.

Of course, the Supreme Court under Warren Burger may well attempt to dam the waves caused by *Serrano*. Some hint of this was contained in the *James* decision which analogized public welfare to private charity and avoided any possible characterization of this form of communal decency as a "fundamental" right. Also, the Supreme Court recently affirmed—in one sentence—a lower federal court decision upholding the constitutionality of Illinois' property tax law, a ruling that gave the *Serrano* majority some difficulty.

On the other hand, the Burger Court has shown some willingness to seriously investigate other claims of discrimination against the poor; two years ago, over the sole objection of the late Justice Black, a Connecticut law mandating certain filing fees in divorce actions was held to be unconstitutionally applied to indigents who were, because of their poverty, prevented from obtaining divorces. Whatever the inclinations of the Burger Court in other areas of Constitutional law, it may well adhere to those Warren Court decisions holding that "lines drawn on the basis of wealth or property, like those of race, are traditionally disfavored." Also the fact that *Serrano* was decided by a six to one majority; that it has been followed by lower federal courts in Minnesota and Texas (subsequent to these decisions, a New Jersey lower court applied the same principle in relation to that state's constitution); that the public is disenchanted with the tax, and that, reportedly, President Nixon is considering a form of sales or ad valorem tax to replace (or reduce) local property taxes—factors such as these may create the favorable "political" atmosphere for a ringing Supreme Court decision upholding the principles of *Serrano*. (The President briefly alluded to such a tax in his State of the Union message.)

Before we all breathe easier and rejoice in the triumph of "right" perhaps we should consider some problems inherent in the concept of equality which underlay *Serrano*. As Professor Alexander Bickel has pointed out in his numerous criticisms of the Warren Court, the drive toward equality was that body's dominant motif. To that end, it ordered the reapportionment of state legislatures, desegregation of public schools, and wrought other fundamental changes in our political and social practices. The results have been ambiguous: not black minorities, but white suburbs have increased their political power; resegregation—by many means, not all of them illegal—often follows desegregation. Richard Nixon proclaims that equality essentially requires the status to be quo, and that H.E.W. is not to foster school integration (although his endorsement of the Philadelphia Plan and other "quota" hiring systems, indicates a paradoxical acceptance of the notion of a measured "inequality," a modest integration). Similarly, if there is an equal protection right to receive the same educational expenditures (as *Serrano* says), then can white parents residing in the suburbs forbid *greater* per pupil expenditures in ghetto schools? Indeed, and perhaps ironically, if a tax less discriminatory in expenditure is to be applied to educational financing, will the burden—at least with a sales tax—not continue to fall upon the poor? Is there a Constitutional right to compel government to *raise* taxes (as distinct from appropriating them) by means which are least likely to have a devastating effect upon the poor or the near-poor?

Of course, the reasoning of the courts, both in segregation cases and in the *Serrano* holding itself, is incomplete and deceptive. Equality is one and only one goal of modern public law in a democratic society. There are others—and some of them may conflict with the principle of equality. The problems faced by the Warren Court were somewhat different than those confronting the new order today. For instance, it will not now do to piously proclaim that "race" is not a constitutionally permissible standard for state action, where that action favors a *formerly disadvantaged race*. It was necessary for the *Brown* case to obliterate race as a means of classifying public school students because of its deleterious effect on a disadvantaged minority, but the world has changed. The reapportionment fight that led to "one man, one vote" was originally fought over *irrational* gerrymandering, over favoritism to geographical areas and interests which were dwindling rather than increasing. Also, political malapportionment in the early '60s was complicated by its tendency to "freeze" minority-majority patterns and a refusal to recognize changing patterns and the emergence of new minorities. Distinctions based upon

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"wealth" are not "disfavored" in all cases, for, if they were, then the progressive income tax and excise taxes would be unconstitutional. What was and is at stake in all of these situations is a form of irrational inequality rather than inequality *per se*.

Before we join a crusade to abolish the regressive (or is it only expensive?) property tax and fund our public schools through sales or ad valorem receipts, we should ask whether the real issue is the rationality of governmental expenditure (and collection) schemes. The society and its judiciary should encourage determinations that inequality may be necessary, hopefully for the short run, to bring about ultimate equality, and government activity to that end should be favored. Perhaps the real property tax is not the true evil; rather, as Ralph Nader has suggested, the glaring inequalities within that tax, in terms of assessments and valuations of property, of exemptions granted to business, may be the problem. When hordes of taxpayers (generally middle-class) vote down increased taxes for education, are they seeking to transfer the financial burden to either the state or the federal government and thus to others, many of whom will be poorer than themselves? In short, didn't the California Supreme Court go too far?

The answer to that question must be the same as it was to those posed by the *Brown* and the reapportionment cases. They were then, and *Serrano* is now, necessary to their times. As the ripples expand, they will in time divert the course of the water. As the complexities of social reconstruction become clearer, some modification of the great doctrines of equality will become necessary. It is difficult to see the end of the road (or to even locate it) while we clear the underbrush from the footpath we have discovered. The ultimate importance of *Serrano* will lie, I believe, not in the property-tax analysis that constituted its immediate concern, but in its recognition that there are "fundamental" rights that we, as "consumers of law" (to quote Edmund Cahn) retain, and that reasonable equality, and possibly reasonable adequacy, of treatment has become a Constitutional norm. As "consumers" (perhaps often as "victims") of "law" we should indeed be thankful that the courts are beginning to comprehend that the reasonable expectations of men in modern democratic society are the proper subject of our ever flexible and (hopefully) ever responsive Constitution.

an exchange of views

The Morality of Abortion

Durham, N.C.

To the Editors: In response to Richard Stith's piece on abortion ["A Secular Case Against Abortion on Demand," Nov. 12, 1971], I must take issue with a number of inaccuracies and inconsistencies contained therein. The article is rife with faulty logic. The arguments stated are not those which uphold his posititon. Indeed, Mr. Stith appears not to understand that very position against which he tries to build a case.

Such statements as "I am only arguing that the whole matter is still worth debating, and therefore that reasonable men and women should oppose abortion 'on demand' " do not logically follow. It seems reasonable to assume that if the matter is still "worth debating" then "reasonable" persons will blindly oppose or support no one position. In his denial of bodies as objects he says, "Insofar as we do not have a right to control ourselves, because we are required to respond to the obligations of community life, we do not have a right to control over our bodies either." This is fine as a point of view, but has no logical basis. It is merely the author's own perception that the society has a greater stake in one's body than does one's self. It is not a truth and certainly is not logical to assume, a priori, its validity.

'A Secular Case Against Abortion On Demand'

Mr. Stith make numerous appeals in defense of his thesis. "I believe that the 'proponents' . . . have failed to see what is publicly at stake: respect for human life and their fellow citizens." "Proponents often dismiss the charge of homicide by asserting that the fetus can not be proven to be a person . . . unless they wish also to advocate infanticide." "Why don't the proponents of abortion see the need to prove that the fetus is not a person in order to say that abortion is not killing?" "It is illegal to dig up and destroy dead bodies. Cannibalism is not something done 'on demand.' " "Yet the fetus is disposed of in abortion as though it were cancer or excrement." "But many Americans consider at least some forms of abortion to be murder. MURDER!" (emphasis his). The examples continue, but one fails to see how such appeals, invoking the specter of infanticide, homicide, murder, and attributing to the 'proponents' the comparison of the fetus to a cancer or excrement further a logical, rational argument. This is not to deny the extremely intense emotional aspects of

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the abortion problem, but such devices have no place in a "rational" piece.

The author states several times that his position is not anti-abortion necessarily, but rather against abortion "on demand." However, the majority of his arguments are those used in opposition to abortion per se. The argument of the fetus as a person, the argument against a woman's control of her own body, the argument that two wrongs do not make a right (as regards tighter paternity laws and fewer adoption restrictions) are all arguments against abortion for any reason. They are not restricted to the case of "on demand." Moreover, Mr. Stith apparently has no concept of what "on demand" means. He appears to believe that upon the uttering of the words 'I want an abortion,' any female may have her uterus evacuated. Demand is defined as "1) to ask or call for with authority; to claim as due or just, 2) to call for urgently, peremptorily, or insistently, 3) to inquire authoritatively or earnestly, 4) to call for or require as necessary or useful; to be in urgent need of" (Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition, Unabridged, 1947). This conveys a greater sense of energy, urgency, and purposefulness on the part of the woman. It means that ". . . the woman alone should judge whether her case fits," (approved abortion guidelines), to quote from Mr. Stith's own work. It is then the physician's duty to ascertain whether or not the woman truly desires the abortion. He does not judge the reasons for her having come to that decision, but rather the strength of her belief in that decision. How can the author hold this as a viable possibility and dismiss the case of "on demand"? They are one and the same. He both upholds and denies the validity of the same act. His 'logic' evades us, and his argument comes to naught.

But given that the "on demand" aspect does not hold up, will the article serve to support a broader anti-abortion stand? It has been shown above that the arguments have been against abortion in general. However, these same arguments are invoked with emotion-laden pleas. The argument of a basic difference between the fertilized and unfertilized egg is fallacious. The unfertilized egg has been shown to contain all of the information necessary for development, indeed, many species reproduce in just such a parthenogenic manner. To assume a qualitative difference between the ovum and the zygote merely because we can not yet manipulate the ovum so as to get complete embryogenesis (since that ability will be most certainly developed) has no firm basis either in science or pure logic.

Finally, one is left with the feeling that Mr. Stith's concept of the entire abortion issue is somewhat limited. He repeatedly makes simplistic, naive, and even glib statements concerning what is at best a complex issue. He begins with: "The trouble with the debate over abortion laws is . . ." It almost does not matter what he says thereafter: his scope is already too limited to be useful or valid. "Even if we did not consider the unborn child as a person, it is clearly human life." (It's not an Airedale . . .") There are many things which are implied in this statement, most of which are emotional. To none of these does the author address himself. And lastly: "And by *wanting* (italics his) to adopt children, we would miraculously help to stop both population growth and the growth of that ethos which considers children burdens to be avoided." Here is invoked the "magical cure" by which all the evils of the world are solved very quickly and neatly. Mr. Stith has done exactly what he accuses others of doing. To paraphrase from his own paper, his debate over abortion laws has never really begun. Instead he has subjected us to an illogical, inconsistent, inaccurate, simplistic, and emotion-laden view of a restricted part of the picture, a part about which he has an erroneous understanding. Such pieces do nothing to promote meaningful discussions of the issues involved. . . .

JONATHAN DUCORE
Duke University School of Medicine

Reply from the Author

To the Editors: Having looked forward to replying to perceptive and substantive criticism of my arguments, I was disappointed to read Mr. Ducore's letter. Most of the time he simply cites my words, and then asserts that they are not rational. If he had argued his points, I might have found counter-arguments. But, as it is, I can only refer readers to the article itself, in the hope that they will be as mystified as I am by his objections.

In the few places where Mr. Ducore does attempt to give reasons in support of his assertions, these reasons unfortunately seem to reveal only his own misunderstanding of the article. Perhaps, as happens to all of us, the effort to criticize made it difficult for him to read with care. For example, he appears to lay great weight on the possibility that we may someday be able to manipulate the ovum in order to induce parthenogenesis. But my point was precisely that the ovum does not contain its own complete form and direction, and so requires an external input, be it a sperm or human manipulation, in order to give it final shape and to let it begin growth. This is a highly delicate matter, which probably requires the work of poets as well as scientists and ethicists, and we really cannot afford rhetorical debates.

Even more surprising is Mr. Ducore's misunderstanding of my central argument against the "on demand" aspect of abortion proposals. Briefly, I begin by assuming that if one has good reasons against doing a particular act, one should not do it—unless one has even better reasons in favor of doing it. Now, I have given, I think, good reasons for her request (reasons which might include, for example, danger to her own life or health). She has only to desire an abortion, as opposed to having to justify her desire (a distinction which Mr. Ducore misses). Therefore abortion "on demand" should not be permitted. In other words, my arguments are, indeed, directed against abortion *per se*, but they are conclusive only against abortion "on

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demand." (And, of course, the words "on demand" are not essential to the case, and have little to do with most of the various meanings of "demand" which Mr. Ducore found in the dictionary. If he wishes, he can speak of "free abortion," *avortement libre,* as the French do, or of a "right" to abortion, or any other terminology which emphasizes that the abortion is granted without asking the woman to justify her request.)

One thing for which I am grateful to Mr. Ducore is the chance to reiterate one of the main positive proposals of the article. If we grant that abortion should be permitted only where it meets the conditions (the "good reasons") accepted by us as a community, we may still ask who ought to determine when these conditions have been met. In other words, who ought to *enforce* a law which permits abortion only under restricted conditions? Perhaps we feel that the doctor or the courts would have dangerously much power if they could inquire into the reasons for a woman's request (although inquiring into her reasons seems to me far less dangerous than inquiring into "the strength of her belief," as Mr. Ducore apparently advocates). In that case, why not have the woman enforce the law against herself? I would envision a woman perhaps signing a statement affirming that she believes her case to meet the presumptive evidence that the abortion is legal. This is by no means equivalent to abortion "on demand," as Mr. Ducore states, because, the woman is required to give a publicly acceptable justification before she is granted an abortion. It is true that only her conscience would "police" her decision, and that some women might lie. But maybe that is the price we must pay. Such a system would at least preserve the publicly acknowledged value of human life, would protect the privacy and dignity of women from bureaucratic incursions, and most importantly, would provide a standard of conduct for those who in conscience want to do the right thing, but who just don't know what is really right or wrong in regard to abortion. RICHARD STITH

'Abortion And Sexual Caste'

Boston, Mass.

To the Editors: It is a losing game to engage in a discussion in which one knows his views are going to be dismissed as those of someone who doesn't know (*and really can't know*) the score or, even worse, who is merely defending a "built-in vested interest." When these incapacities are linked to nothing more than one's maleness, we have an interesting variant of the sexist thinking Prof. Daly, ["Abortion and Sexual Caste," Feb. 4] and other feminist spokeswomen so rightly condemn in others.

I did not develop the legislative question in my article because it was peripheral to my concern about abortion as an imposed termination of the life process and its total incompatibility with pacifism or any other position based on a reverence for life. Since

the new feminism has become the principal vehicle for open advocacy of abortion and has placed so much emphasis upon the woman's "property rights" in her own body as deserving priority over the personal rights of the human being whose life process has begun, it was on this level that I chose to argue the case. The legislation issue is too complex to be summarized this briefly but, since the objection has been raised, this would by my general position: I probably would oppose the introduction of new anti-abortion legislation because I do not feel that punitive legislation is the most appropriate channel for dealing with moral questions; on the other hand, I probably would oppose repeal of existing legislation because such repeal would carry with it (as it clearly has done in New York) implications of social approval and authorization. If the laws are repealed or, as seems increasingly likely, invalidated by court decisions, I would not consider this a moral or legal disaster. However, I do reject the argument that the existing laws by being "sex specific" are unjust instruments of female oppression, just as I do not regard laws against rape—"sex selective" too, in their application at least—as vehicles for the unjust oppression of males. Both have to do with extreme violations of basic human rights, and that is justification enough for formal social concern.

To respond fully to the Daly article would require a recapitulation of my earlier article. Some points cannot be ignored, however. The flippant dismissal of the rights of a putative father does Ms. Daly's argument little justice especially if, as I would assume, she is not prepared to be equally flippant about society's efforts, imperfect as they admittedly are, to establish his responsibilities, financial and otherwise. Second, and much more critical, is her failure to address herself to the crucial question of the nature and rights of the intended victims of abortion (about fifty percent of whom, if I may suggest an additional statistic worthy of note, are likely to be female).

This latter omission has an important bearing upon her overall case. I happen to feel that the author's description of the total oppression of women is exaggerated and that the use of "caste" —a sociological concept implying no prospect of upward mobility whatsoever across fixed status boundaries—is in fact belied by her own distinguished career and the positions attained by other feminist leaders. Inequity and discrimination are beyond question and should be opposed, but the picture of inflexible and structured oppression she presents as the condition of women today is open to challenge. By a supreme irony, her article does touch upon a form of oppression that she apparently fails to recognize. The real measure of oppression is the extent to which an

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individual and his actions are subject to the command of another and his very existence made dependent upon the pleasure, the whims, the convenience or the self-determined "necessity" of that other. The radical feminists with their advocacy of abortion on demand—and, Dr. Daly notwithstanding, this is the real force behind the agitation for repeal of existing laws—are in effect claiming rights which would reach the absolute in oppression, "rights" which would give them the arbitrary power to destroy a human being at those stages of development when its dependency is greatest.

GORDON C. ZAHN
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Univ. of Mass.—Boston

Steinfels (cont.)

men, college-educated women and men, or women and men under 30. In fact, Ms. Blake found that "young women (those under 30) consistently disapprove elective abortion more than older women."

Of course, the enactment of abortion reform in several states and the effect of women's liberation might have altered this situation; the last poll Ms. Blake examined dated from 1969. And it is true that opposition to liberalized abortion laws continues to decline. According to the recent announcement of a poll taken for the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future, "Half of all Americans believe that abortions should be a matter decided solely between individual couples and their doctors."

But what about the differences between the views of men and women? The Commission's press release offered no figures, so I called their office in Washington and was very kindly provided with some relevant statistics. Women under 30 now appear to be more favorable toward liberalized abortion than those over 30, but the differences between women and men remain. They have, if anything, increased. When asked if they thought abortion decisions should be made by couples and doctors alone, 53 percent of the men said yes, compared to 45 percent of the women. Thirty-nine percent of the men but 44 percent of the women said abortion should be permitted only under certain circumstances. Four percent of the men but 8 percent of the women said it should not be permitted under any circumstances at all.

There is a ready feminist reply to figures showing the opposition of women to abortion, and Mary Daly has foreseen to include it in her article. Women, like other oppressed groups, have "internalized the consciousness of the superordinate group." No doubt one could have found many slaves who accepted slavery and proletarians who were convinced of the incomparable merits of *laissez-faire* capitalism. History, as Mary Daly is surely aware, provides numerous examples of "prophetic minorities" and vanguard militants who made the case for an oppressed mass when the mass was unable to make the case for itself. But she is also no doubt aware of the danger of such a self-appointed mission, historically demonstrated with depressing frequency, of mistaking the vanguard's own quite distinct interests for the "experience and needs" of the mass it pretends to represent.

The problem is that the figures do not simply show that many women (in fact a majority) are opposed to abortion repeal or abortion on demand; they show *more women than men* so opposed. It is as though one not only found slaves accepting slavery but more slaves accepting it than slaveowners; as though one found more proletarians accepting Manchester capitalism and the 60-hour work week than capitalists.

Perhaps there is another explanation for this sex differential on the abortion question—a generalized feminine conservatism, which feminists, rejecting biological causes, might perceive as another outcome of the sexual caste system. Judith Blake, too, considered this possibility. She concluded that it did not find support in data on other controversial questions. "For example, with respect to opinions concerning the Johnson Administration's advancement of racial integration, in seven polls women consistently expressed the view less often than men that Johnson was pushing 'too fast,' and women evinced more satisfaction with his integration policies. . . . Sometimes women are more favorable toward direct action for the purpose of effecting social change than men are. For instance, more women than men would approve a clergyman in their church taking part in protest marches on civil rights issues."

If women, who are more liberal than men on other questions, are more conservative on abortion (and, of course, the polls show blacks and the poor more conservative than whites and the affluent), then there are at least some important questions about the relationship between "the experience and needs of women" and the repeal of abortion restrictions. If radical abortion liberalization is to be regarded in man/woman terms, does not the margin of evidence suggest it is at least as much a men's issue as a women's issue, and probably more so? If men have consistently led women in opposing anti-abortion measures, might not this fact, too, be examined more critically in the light of the sexual caste system? "Divided within themselves and against themselves," writes Mary Daly, "women by and large have not been able to challenge the value system of the dominant elite, even in matters vitally affecting their own lives." Could not the movement of women to oppose abortion restrictions, trailing as it does always a handful of percentage points behind the movement of men in the same direction, be seen as the final confirmation of this subordination, rather than a departure from it? One wonders: whom do the "feminine ethicians" really represent?

I hope to return to this subject in another column.

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POOR SCOTT AGAIN

SAUL MALOFF

Of Fitzgerald there will be no end, for we are helplessly mesmerized by his disintegration and failure.

ONE DAY there will be a huge "definitive" biography of Faulkner, a rush of fragmentary memoirs and reminiscences, and there will be an end to it. The obligatory biography of Hemingway remains to be written from the materials assembled by Carlos Baker in his massive book, which was not so much completed as abandoned, as well as other materials he either had no access to or could not use effectively or failed to find a way to use at all. But of Fitzgerald there will be no end, for we are helplessly mesmerized by his disintegration and failure. Not his triumph: thirty years after his death, nearly as long after his canonization as author of one of the most widely read of all American novels, a novel that's been read lifeless, read to death by generations of undergraduates and mentors equipped with study guides, a novel that's had the calamitous misfortune to become a teaching text which can be made, semester after semester, to yield up to the most slothful eye all the approved and certified literary insights— after all that, what remains to be said of Jay and Daisy, Nicole and Dick, the once green, beckoning, despoiled land and our corrupted dreams, blasted hopes?

There is something sinister in our infatuation, which was his also, with failure. The line we love to roll on our tongues is that saddest one of all about the "authority of failure." Everybody dotes on a failure, loves to feel for a failure moist pity, which is indistinguishable from contempt. The perfect victim of our love, of course, is not any old failure; but a failure who has toppled from such supreme success as Fitzgerald's when, for a brief time, he had everything, or seemed to. For our true happiness, La Rochefoucauld said, it is not enough that we succeed; it is also necessary that our best friend fail. Scott Fitzgerald is our best friend. We find it as easy chummily to call him "Scott" as we do to aggrandize his wife and daughter as "Zelda" and "Scottie." "Poor Scott," we say, as if the word were an old family name; and we remember with a warm spreading feeling, as if it were his epitaph, Dorothy Parker's farewell when at his funeral she gazed for the last time at her old friend and whispered: "Poor sonofabitch." How fine and fitting for us that good old Scott, with the perfect tact he commanded in his best work, should have gone to Hollywood to die.

George Orwell once said (in response to one of those depressing questionnaires in a literary magazine) that if a writer has to work for a living, he should take a job that made no "creative" demands on him— not even the semi-creative demands of teaching. Add to that a fixed feature of writers' folklore: Hollywood is death; if the writer is not already dead when he goes there, the life will be the death of his remains. Both notions contain part-truths; neither can withstand close scrutiny. Much more likely, those who are killed have been long since dead; or the pulse beats so feebly, anything will kill it. No strong writer was ever killed by it. Faulkner and Nathaniel West (to take obvious examples of first-rate writers contemporaneous with Fitzgerald in Hollywood) are not exceptions to the rule but rather striking evidence that the rule is a tale told one another by lesser writers over cocktails on the rim of kidney-shaped swimming pools. Neither man had any illusions about and neither had any doubts about his powers as a writer. Neither *confused* writing with a studio job-classification that required placing one little word after another. It was a job; the pay was good; and they could more or less competently fill a slot in the production line. And above all they could work out of a corner of the imagination as remote as possible from the deep core; the corner located not in the head but in the fingertips.

Not Fitzgerald; he was riddled with illusions. Of course he went West out of necessity; he needed money, piles of it. Zelda was in the hospital; Scottie was in school; his life was a shambles: he had suffered the renowned crackup, he was creatively exhausted, the bottom had fallen out of his literary market. His taste, his instinct was frayed: he was writing paltry stories he thought "awfully" good. Those readers who, in the later '30s, didn't consider him washed-up thought him dead, literally. By then, so remote did the '20s seem, nothing he had written was still in print. He was his own ghost. Yet if some benefactor had then bestowed on him a sum not even he could exhaust, I think it nonetheless certain he would still have gone to Hollywood, and gratefully. That awesome concentration of power, money, glamour; but equally magnetic was the glittering screen itself. Always star-struck, he had himself at one time undergone a screen test: that nose, that profile, those soft Irish good looks. But above all, it looked like his last fair chance of returning as a writer, of staging a sensational resurrection via the magic of movies.

The attempt, as ploddingly detailed by Aaron Latham (*Crazy Sundays: F. Scott Fitzgerald in Hollywood*, Viking, $7.95), makes miserable reading. Like his subject, Latham, a victim of the writer's myth of Hollywood, missed the point and therefore the true pathos. Yes, yes, of course Hollywood

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was a fiefdom lorded over by rampant yahoos; one almost wants to say most uncharitably that anyone who doesn't know that without having to make the bloody discovery for himself deserves everything he gets. Naturally Louis Mayer (who, had he not existed, would have to be invented) would inquire, upon being asked whether the author of *The Great Gatsby* might embellish his payroll: "Scott who?" Certainly Sam Goldwyn, Nixon's favorite producer, as Nixon is Goldwyn's favorite President (a marriage made in Heaven if ever there was one, and the Vulcan as it were who developed the rubber nipple which, if it could not nourish, could at least pacify a populace) certainly Sam, I was saying, would cause him grief. And perfectly, in one of these golden moments almost too good to be true, Joan Crawford would say, when Fitzgerald told her with what must have been excitement and pride that he would write her next picture: "Good. Write hard, Mr. Fitzgerald; write hard." Fitzgerald's life in Hollywood was made up of such moments.

But these were only some of the visible and more lurid signs of his purgatory. The confusion lay deeper, in his own hapless illusion that things could be otherwise in a scheme of production which of its nature reduced the writer almost to inconsequence, even when his script stood as written, as it almost never did. *Of its nature*—and Fitzgerald never seemed to understand the point, no matter how many indignities he suffered. The point is that the best movie-writers, by and large, are not writers at all, which is not to say they're not good something-else having to do at several removes with drama and language. The further point is that when he was doing his best "writing" for movies—the lines and passages cut out of the script by the hacks or forever buried in studio morgues—he was writing novelistically, not cinematically, certainly not as films were defined there or then. For such films, a writer of Fitzgerald's quality wasn't necessary, or even desirable; the second-raters, and the third- and fourth-, were the most competent craftsmen: they produced exactly what was required, and no nonsense or illusions about what they were doing. The others—the directors, editors, actors, musicians, scene-designers, make-up men—could tart it up and deliver the finished product. Of his best writing they said, accurately, they couldn't shoot it. The pathos—and unless full allowance is made both for Fitzgerald's uncertainties of taste and his infinite capacity for self-deception, it can scarcely be believed—lay in his confusion of writing with scripting. *Their* taste was never uncertain: it was always bad. He was deluded enough, innocent enough to believe that the storyteller's art was transferable from fiction to film, an alien medium; just as other novelists have supposed they could readily adapt their gift for scene and "dialogue" to the stage, one being another form of the other. The charnel-house of the theater is full of those bones, Twain's and James' among them. Of the films he worked on—was assigned to—only one, *Three Comrades*, was credited to him, though bits and pieces of his labors remain in insipid stews concocted by the short-order cooks. "Fine" touches bearing the marks of Fitzgerald's distinctive signature are in such contexts incongruous, disconcerting, finally pretentious and in bad taste.

Latham, like Fitzgerald, is a prisoner of a thesis: namely, that good is good in whatever guise or trappings and wherever you find it; and its corollary: that in this wicked world, bad triumphs over good. Hence: a parable of the Artist thrown to the hyenas. What the contretemps between Fitzgerald and Joseph Mankiewicz comes down to—to take the most notorious exemplum—is not another sordid or melancholy instance of the triumph of Commerce over Art; at issue were radically opposed sensibilities and ideas of what a movie was. Fitzgerald's version of *Three Comrades* was full of his special subtlety and delicate understanding; Mankiewicz wanted to get a movie packed with tried-and-proven gestures and workable clichés, a better-than-fair movie as it turned out, but a Hollywood movie withal. That Doctor Mankiewicz could never understand Fitzgerald's outrage goes without saying. One was a writer, the other a scripter.

The Films

And so it went, in film after film. The touches Fitzgerald brought to the finished script of *Gone With The Wind*, when Selznick rented him to give it a little of the old class, were on the evidence a mixed lot: some lovely shading, of which Latham makes far too much, which is the besetting sin of thesis-mongering; some merely pedantic or precious, differences that make no difference. And so too with *Cosmopolitan* (based on the lovely story "Babylon Revisited"), which was to have featured Shirley Temple and which never went into production, though nearly fifteen years later it "inspired" another film, *The Last Time I Saw Paris*, which is related to the original as plaster of Paris is to marble. The evidence Latham provides simply does not support the claims he makes for the screenplay, which employs the not terribly remarkable fictional device of shifting interplay between the point of view of the little girl and that of the strange giants who loom above her. In sensitive hands, no doubt, something fine might have been made of it; but the elder Schulberg, who passed judgment in these matters, was interested in vehicles, pizzazz and tear-jerkers, not in something fine. Fitzgerald was dealing in lace, but they were cutting velvet that season.

Poor Scott. Better than anybody else he knew what the West was, and what had happened to it; but he had once been a beautiful writer, and he desperately needed one more chance at art and life. So he went to the only place left that dealt in big money and flashy fame, not knowing that the odds are always on the house's side, and that the game was hopelessly rigged.

SAUL MALOFF, *former establishment critic and professor, has just completed a new novel and is fighting a losing battle to live off the land.*

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BOOKS

Religious journalism for people who need it most

Ascent of the Mountain, Flight of the Dove

MICHAEL NOVAK

Harper & Row, $5.95

All the Catholic People

MICHAEL NOVAK

Herder and Herder, $5.95

Politics: Realism and Imagination

MICHAEL NOVAK

Herder and Herder, $2.45

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH

Michael Novak says he loves to write; and, in his own way, he is a most faithful—indeed, indulgent—lover.

I recall reading his reviews when he was a seminarian in Rome, watching the initials disappear from after his name, and following his work with mixed admiration as he chronicled the passing of the pre-conciliar church, proclaimed the good news of his discovery of sex, and moved in and out of the academic world from Harvard to Stanford, to experimental Old Westbury for its birth and final disillusioning days. Walk into a periodical room, pick up a religious magazine or journal and he has been *there*—explaining Bernard Lonergan, rethinking the nature of the church, defending ethnics, pointing to the latest evidence that American civilization is falling apart.

In this way, Novak has offered a real service. He has not been frightened off by charges of dilettantism; he has taken the basic risk any good journalist must take—the risk of being called "wrong" —to produce under pressure a continuous account of what Ned O'Gorman has called "these fruitful, crazy days in the church." Throughout these years his central concern has been *the* crucial problem, the problem of belief. And, along with a number of modern theologians on whom he relies, he has broadened the concept of belief so that its starting point is no longer simply an individual's relationship with his church or with his transcendent creator, but rather a man's openness to life, to the fundamental experiences of love, compassion and joy.

While the more professional theologians have written largely for each other, Novak has written for the people who needed him most, those who were trying to make sense out of their lives. He has written with a feel for human tragedy and with a confidence in our ability to survive it; and this, I suspect, is why his *Belief and Unbelief*, composed in the wake of his own brother's death, had some success in college theology courses. This too is why passages from Novak have shown up on mod holy cards and have been read at informal Masses during the liturgy of the word.

These three books—dust-jackets all decorated with macabre sketches by Karen Laub-Novak of what can only be described as flying flayed corpses—bring together his latest ideas. *Ascent of the Mountain, Flight of the Dove*, an invitation to religious studies, is the most ambitious of the three. Religious studies, he contends, are an invitation to life itself, a moving from standpoint to standpoint as men act out their sense of themselves, creating their own self-stories, struggling upward, growing, and occasionally "graced" by truth—as by the flight of the dove.

Yet, with all the sublimity of its theme, this seems the least satisfying of these books. Novak's main value is as a religious journalist, an interpreter and critic of other more detached scholars' discoveries. He is a learned social analyst who more often than not can put his finger on what is happening in our slippery world; whereas he sees himself as a theologian among theologians, creating his own labels and categories —whether or not they represent a really new idea. This book, I suppose, is a version of a course he gave in religious studies at Stanford and the late Old Westbury. It may have been a very good course; but the success of this project depends very much on the peculiar chemistry between students and their teacher. Meanwhile, the examples and insights that have punch in lectures or in essays written in response to books or national events seem lost in the author's attenuated epistemology.

All the Catholic People: Where Did All the Spirit Go? and *Politics: Realism and Imagination*, collections of his regular pieces for *Commonweal, Christianity and Crisis, Center* magazine and other publications, are more satisfying both because their pretensions are more modest and because their best observations have lost neither their immediacy nor their impact. Some of his better moments: Hubert Humphrey retreating in disgrace from a Vietnam debate with Stanford students; Novak's damning perception of the "quietly ironic, self-distancing quips that ivy league schools have isolated as a sign of intelligence"; his conclusion that Charles Reich's promised book on how to change political structures is like the old faded hope that better liturgies would lead to social action.

Meanwhile, behind the observations, what are Novak's dominant concerns? He is working toward a more adequate descriptive definition of what it is to be Catholic. It is "to belong to a historical people." It is style, prayer, the presence of God. It is a taste for thick steaks and good cigars! A cold beer in July. A sense of play, fantasy and failure. An affirmation that the Christian imagination with its sense of tragedy is more in tune with the world than is the progress story of the Enlightenment. At the same time, Novak is not ashamed of his own or the church's past. He mines

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them affectionately, particularly his old love of Maritain, to reinforce his new faith.

Novak has also become a severe critic of the hollowness of American culture, its invisible civic religion, its evasive amoral desiccated intellectuals and its flabby counter-culture. Finally, his notion of belief has led him necessarily toward political action, to Vietnam, to Paris, to the Democratic Convention in Chicago, and paradoxically to his recent conviction that our special mission now must be to give a voice to the hard-hat silent majority—the great Catholic voting block as a base from which all the issues of American politics could be redefined.

Michael Novak may or may not be right when he asserts that the church is best understood as a "people," that there is a real connection between Catholicism and the smell of a cigar, that the most accessible American passion is guilt, that "secularization" has made nuns dull people, and that maybe only atheists and young persons know the silence of contemplation. Personally, I think a lot of his statements are off the mark; in spite of his erudition he offers little evidence for some of his assertions other than his own intuition and experience. But while less intuitive, more reticent and perhaps more profound Catholic thinkers have kept their supposed wisdom to themselves on the crises of these last bloody years, we have always had Michael Novak's slim, brave, persistent voice—and he has helped transform the church.

Cuba: The Pursuit of Freedom

HUGH THOMAS

Harper & Row, $20

GABRIEL GERSH

Cuba began, Hugh Thomas tells us, ten years ago when he was listening to one of Castro's four-hour epic harangues, with their usual mixture of candor, statistics and rant, and watching a gay, multiracial crowd singing and dancing a cha-cha to the accompaniment of the "Internationale." Gradually, he was encouraged to question more deeply how this unique society had evolved.

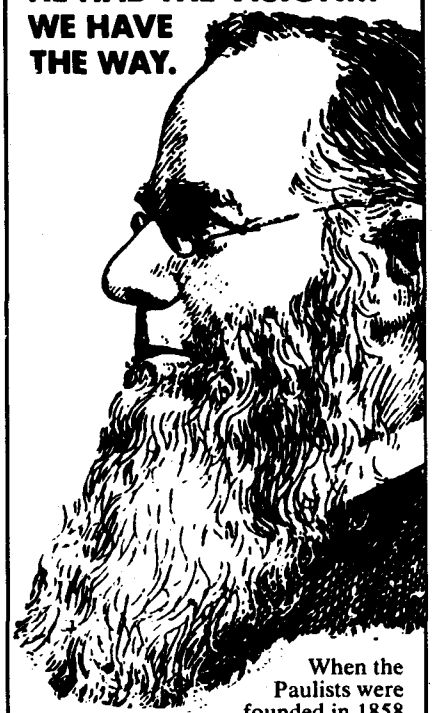
Mr. Thomas' final answer, as it now appears in this book, outdoes even Castro's monologues. The text fills 1,696 pages; the historical survey covers Cuba between 1762 and 1962; the bibliography has 697 entries; there are 15 technical Appendices for Cuban and world sugar production during the past 300 years. Cuba's fatally dependent relations, first with imperial Spain and then with imperial America at the turn of the nineteenth century, are thoroughly examined. The development of the slave and sugar trade are charted in reeling statistical detail. The disreputable tangle of relations between American ambassadors and Cuban Presidents is examined for every nuance of double meaning and hidden motive. Merely as a history of Cuba, this monument clearly threatens to become the "standard work" which guards the perimeter of the bookcase from invasion or collapse.

The sheer bulk of such a work may daunt many readers. But this would be a pity, since it is an important book, fascinating in much of its detail, and admirably fair-minded and perceptive in its judgments.

The huge scale of the book is justified by the author because "so much that seems obscure in the present Cuban scene becomes more comprehensible if set against the experiences of the previous four or five generations." The main strands are the island's slave-based economy, the struggle against Spain, and the United States' economic and political domination. These strands cross and tangle to produce Castro's revolution and the missile crisis of 1962, when "Cuba, for so long the victim of the great rich powers and their sugar-eating populaces . . . almost got her own back and threatened to drag the great powers down with her."

The corruption and violence of Cuban sugar society is one of the main themes in the book. The scale of Cuban corruption is not to be traced to the Spanish sale of office (a general

HE HAD THE VISION... WE HAVE THE WAY.



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phenomenon throughout the Spanish Empire) but to the succession of sugar bonanzas and depressions, which fostered a speculative, unstable, corrupt society.

It was against this background of corruption and graft that Cuban radical nationalism gained momentum. The heroic struggle against Batista is related in one of the fullest and most precise accounts, resisting all conflicting prejudices which this episode is likely to provoke. After 200 pages we have a clear understanding of how Batista fell and why he did more than any other Cuban ruler to hasten Castro's victory.

Present revolutionaries lay the blame for Cuba's corruption and violence on its asphyxiating relations with the U.S. The U.S. intervention was decisive in defeating Spain and obtaining independence for Cuba in 1898. Intervention persisted, partly because Cuba was a satellite economy and a profitable outlet for U.S. investments, and partly because Cubans were incapable of creating a stable, decent government.

This is not to excuse the U.S. policy toward Cuba. Mr. Thomas rightly sees it as ambiguous and confused, the blunderings of a great power with no conception of the susceptibilities of a small nation. Its liberating intentions in 1898 were a curious blend of idealism, self-interest and jingoism whipped up by the Hearst press.

The account given of Castro's rise to power and the subsequent changes brought about by the charismatic and unpredictable *caudillo* is probably the fullest and fairest which has been produced. His previous studies of the Spanish Civil War provide the author with some interesting insights, one of which is that Castro was deeply influenced by José Antonio, the founder of the Falange.

Mr. Thomas does not attempt to explain all the enigmas of Castro's personality and career—did the seemingly liberal guerrilla leader intend from the outset to turn Cuba into a Communist country, and did he or Khrushchev take the lead in having the fateful rockets installed in Cuba?—but his hypotheses are always well argued and meticulously documented.

Incidentally, Khrushchev, if we are to believe his memoirs, says baldly that the rocket idea was his own. What is certain is that the issue of life or nuclear death, which lifts Mr. Thomas' narrative from a parochial to an awesomely global level, was not decided by Castro. "Small powers," the author writes, "often begin world crises, great powers always end them."

Judging by what Mr. Thomas says, it does not seem as if circumstances within the island will change for the better soon, and, if he is right in his argument that Cubans rebel in good times, Castro is safe from trouble for a long time. His great effort to morally cleanse all aspects of Cuban life, to replace Batista's obligatory vice with compulsory virtue, cannot bring any easy fast returns, and overinsistence on the moral dimension will meet with the same results in Cuba as elsewhere. The regime is one of the most personal in the world, and though this may not have corrupted the personality of the leader, it has placed the whole island at the mercy of caprice.

"Castro," Mr. Thomas writes in his final interpretation of the regime, "has created a strong, ruthless but original and popular despotism, with many remarkable social reforms to its credit and which, whatever label is given to it, represents a serious challenge to the liberal society. It would be an even more serious one if the totalitarian side of the system were dismantled and if free discussion and criticism were to be encouraged." Whether Castro would consider this point relevant remains to be seen. One passionately hopes so.

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REVIEWERS

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Uplands

A. R. AMMONS

Norton, $5

Nowhere But Light

BEN BELITT

U. of Chicago Press, $4.95

The Charges

ALBERT COOK

Swallow, $6.95

The Mirrored Walls

HELENE MULLINS

Twayne, $5.95

Nostalgias for a House of Cards

BYRON VAZAKAS

October House, $4.95

By Daylight and In Dream

JOHN HALL WHEELOCK

Scribner's, $6.95

SR. ELEANOR FITZGIBBONS

It is difficult to introduce in limited space six poets, all experienced writers, each one with several books of poems to his credit. Each one in his own voice and place has discoveries to share about earth, sea, and sky. Each one has something to tell us about the creative process: "To be minimal,/minimal: to diminish excess, to pare it as a child pares an orange" challenges the reviewer to similar economy as he lets these poets speak for themselves.

Uplands, by A. R. Ammons, is a pilgrimage to temporary marvels beginning at the poet's home: "in my yard's more wordage than I/can read:/ . . . the problem is how to keep shape and flow." Then it meanders in and out of woods, asking "bright thoughts of roots," pausing by "spits of glitter in low grade ore" or where "the underground's a conveyance of butterflies" to praise "the Magnitude of Uselessness" and discover the "salvation of waste" ("especially the fallen tree/the

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snow picks out to show"). *Uplands*, paradoxically, is a journey over the "landscape of descent" by a poet with metaphysical sensibility, an imagist eye, and fine sense of line. The thirty-five poems in this collection, Ammons' seventh, are best summed up by the poet himself: "I find I am able to say/ only what is in my head: a heady constraint: and to say it only/as well as I can." The result is "lyric information/totally processed."

"The poet is a fisher in time: not of fish/in the sea, but the whole living catch." Ben Belitt, in his fourth book of poems, focuses apocalyptic powers on the "antipodal man" of Mexico and Vermont. "Intact and unseen" he waits "over and under his subject" until he can "strike with the weight of the diamond." In poem after poem "all is returned with a dazzle": like and unlike, impure and pure, owned or disowned, things that are, things that are not for our peace. "In that prosthetic world, the Solarium/lights a junkpile of used parts: the hip that caught/a ricochet of shrapnel;/. . . scars like fizzled fuses;/. . . automated claws in candy; the Laser's edge; and barium./. . . The amputee is swinging in his aviary./His fingers walk the bird-bars." Belitt has amazing mastery of metaphor. *Nowhere but Light* brilliantly fulfills his desire to write poems which "coincide exactly with the time that induced them and give the spirit a further dimension to move in."

"Here a new Promethean heat/ throws the sun into a cheat." Dramatic, intensely personal, enigmatic, Albert Cook's third book of poems is a rich and exciting collection "heady as new/ Blossom." Meeting some of these poems for the first time is like trying to stare into "the blazing simplicity of a sun." They demand humility in the less gifted reader "that poor man/who is blind to his brown floor," as well as sensitivity to the "charges" that so mysteriously penetrate yet partially elude one's perception. For the poet this art is seemingly effortless: "Glass ripples a rainbow on its jagged edge/I give my luminosities free play." Warning: He who looks for "instant reading" will find himself in a remarkably constructed labyrinth. "And if what meets the eye,/Iris over blue,/ambiguous excellence,/Evades revelation/in the needle's eye/whose circumference is everywhere?"

"Helene Mullins celebrates people in their quarrels with life and frustration. . . ." Her poetry is "the candor of a woman who writes out of personal encounters, not the hearsay of life, and some of it will endure in substance as well as song." This tribute from A. M. Sullivan's introduction to *The Mirrored Walls* sums up the best of this poet's collected poems 1929-1969. What may fail to endure will be poems that suffer, by default, from the very virtues for which their maker is praised: her gift of facile diction, musical phrasing, concern with meaning and purpose. These qualities betray Miss Mullins when she lets meter and rhyme ignore her felt thought, when she favors an easy abstraction for the fresh, hard-won metaphor.

In *Nostalgias for a House of Cards*, his fourth book of poems, Byron Vazakas looks inward at the process of change in his own psyche. "Nostalgia is history." "Each/absent self invades its retrospective/space." But it takes a good poet to turn introspection into a successful "monument on the way." Vazakas does just that as he dramatizes the "nightmare of sudden death and sudden indigence" with its far-reaching consequences on his own childhood. "To lose/ is worse than never to have had." The poet, however, is magnanimous. He can tap without bitterness the suffering and maladjustment that provided the source of many of his poems. What at first appears to be free verse in many poems turns out to be a surprisingly consistent iambic pentameter line, disguised and disciplined to serve the poem's intention. "air/ echoed like his own surprise what words could do." This poetry of remembrance is balanced, urbane and rich in allusion.

By Daylight and In Dream is John Hall Wheelock's winnowing of ten previous books from 1904-1966 including thirty pages of new poems. I would like to give his book a Chardinian subtitle: *Hymns of the Universe*. It is indeed a jubilee celebration, all diamond, by a man whose lifelong vocation has been "to render articulate the joy that sings/ within him, the deep joy/ behind the tragic mask of things." The poet, he reminds us, is "a mouth to tell us something we have forgotten." Each reader must hear and see for himself. Wheelock's latter-day fear seems groundless: "whom does he speak to—there is none to hear!" Poetry so radiantly alive is hardly destined for limbo.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 459)

many teachers who don't know why children speak this way, considers Black English "exotic or quaint speech." People who use this speech every day, as their natural, normal way of talking, don't think of it as "exotic or quaint," just as Bengalis don't consider their everyday variety of Sanskrit as "exotic," and cockneys don't think of their English dialect as "quaint." Mr. Laird's description of a dialect that's very much alive as "exotic or quaint" merely

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reveals ethnocentrism instead of willingness to face reality.

In addition, I fail to understand how my article, which supports the N.A.A.C.P.'s position that black children should be taught Standard English in school, can possibly contribute to the characterization of black ghetto children as "uneducable."

(MRS.) DOROTHY Z. SEYMOUR

Substandard Benefits

Philadelphia, Pa.

To the Editors: Your report on the Philadelphia Archdiocese's banning the cheese-and-wine benefit for the *Catholic Substandard and Times* from the Newman facilities on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania [News and Views, Nov. 26] failed to mention the fact that the affair was moved to the International House across the street, and successfully raised more han $500.00 for the support of "the only independent Catholic newspaper in Philadelphia."

DON QUIXOTE
& the *Substandard* Staff

Reorganizing the Schools

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: George Elford's analysis [Jan. 28] of the recent report of the special Commission set up to chart "future directions" for the Catholic elementary and secondary schools in Chicago was a telling, perceptive critique. As the Commission's chairman, I appreciated the insights derived from his experience as a diocesan school superintendent and research director for the Catholic educational establishment.

He has me at a disadvantage, however. He is far too comfortable with that rhetorical overkill which permits him to suggest that the report "was drafted in the euphemistic tradition of the Pentagon" but which often smothers real issues. Nowhere does he reveal his own position. My understanding of his criticism would have been illuminated, had I known at *what* crossroads he was standing and in which direction he would like to see Catholic schools go.

To deal with the present crisis, and with an eye on the future, the Commission proposed a radical reorganization of Catholic schools:

—Local schools would be separated financially and administratively from the parish. The parish would now be free to resolve its own problems of identity. Schools would have the chance to explore their own character and future. Elford should recognize our proposal as responding to the issues he raised in an earlier article [Jan. 29/71] on "School Crisis—or Parish Crisis?"

—Schools would be part of a free-standing system within, or related to, the church. The local school would become the building block of voluntary school federation combining the advantages of local option with centralized services.

—Parents basically would become responsible for the schools, with new service roles for pastors and religious. Parents would enter into a variety of cooperative relationships with clergy, religous and other laity to provide an education for their children.

—Finally, the decision to do without a school or to start a new one would be made, not downtown, but locally.

Such a reorganization specifically rejects, as a way out of the schools' current troubles, the road to more centralized control and administration—as represented by those diocesan school offices which model themselves after the "pentagons" of public boards of education. Intentionally, the Commission's proposal goes counter to the results of a 1970 NCEA survey in which the majority of school superintendents responding hoped strongly for central diocesan financing to replace other forms of support for Catholic schools.

Elford centers his attention on the dangers of parochialism in any proposal for control by local school boards. He is not alone in this concern. The possibility that Catholic schools will become elitist, serving only those who can afford them, is a real one. Many of the Commission's recommendations were directed toward marshaling the com-

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bined efforts of the entire church of Chicago to provide for the education of children who come from low-income families, who live in public housing projects, and whose parents are newly arrived immigrants or recent arrivals from the South or Puerto Rico. Today, nearly 30,000 black students, a third of them not Catholic, attend Catholic schools in the Chicago archdiocese.

To place the narrower concerns of local schools within a broader, metropolitan outlook, the Commission called for:

—Establishment of a new archdiocesan school office of development and planning, one of whose functions would be to plan for the survival of inner city schools.

—Initiative by religious orders to encourage their members and direct their resources to schools which educate the poor, the neglected and society's leftouts.

—Involvement of colleges and universities, through the adoption of inner city schools as laboratory or experimental schools. These and a dozen similar recommendations are detailed in the Commission's report.

On the other hand the Commission, unlike Elford apparently, recognizes real value in local control of schools. Community and parental responsibility brings its own special vitality and advantage. Local control of U.S. public schools enabled them to contribute significantly to the development of the United States as a nation. Historically, the strength of the parish school came from its local character. Would he discard the family because it is a "parochial" institution? The educational challenge is to build upon such indigenous strength, while providing institutional support for those larger Christian concerns which are so easily neglected.

Finally, Elford is mistaken on one crucial point and perhaps misunderstands the way the Commission produced its report. He suggests that the Commission failed to concern itself with the "present vitality and future viability of the basic institutions upon which Catholic education has always depended" and with those "radical and root problems," such as the meaning and future of the church and religion in itself. He couldn't be more wrong. Countless hours of argument and headbanging dealt with questions such as these:

—How do you get people (laity, clergy, religious) who have become accustomed to a highly centralized, authoritarian school administration, in both public and non-public schools, to shift to free-standing schools? If you are used to decisions coming from the top, how do you develop co-responsibility to replace the pyramid model of authority?

—What is the best response to the decline in interest in Catholic schools among many young Catholics—priests, religious and laity alike?

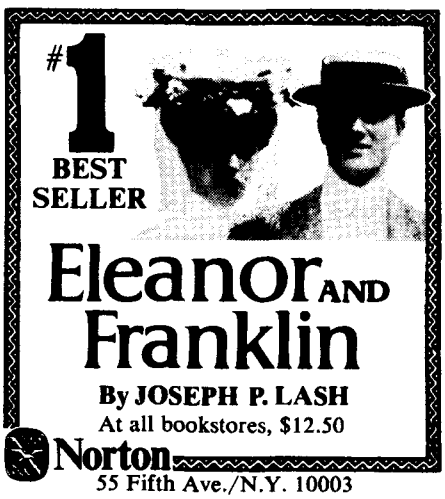
—How do you confront the religious and educational expectations that parents have of Catholic schools? If half the children in a Catholic school don't come to church on Sunday, what is the reason for a Catholic school? The reason for the local church? What are the implications of full schools and empty churches?

The Commission's toughest task was to translate its extended questioning into practical recommendations. It had not been asked to resolve those theological, ecclesiastical and sociological issues which churn the church, nor to arrange a consensus before coming up with directions for the future of Catholic schools. Had the Commission waited for the returns to come in, no report would have been turned out. Nevertheless, a reading of the report will demonstrate that its recommendations do, in fact, reflect considered views about the purposes of a Catholic school, the nature of the church, and the future of certain religious institutions.

In reaching its conclusion the Commission recognized that the general public also was one of the schools' constituencies. The public benefits from Catholic schools, its attitude shaping public policy toward them. A large section of the report is devoted to putting private religious schools within a *public* context. Hence the report addresses that wider public audience, self-consciously avoiding the jargon of Catholic educators and theologians. Is this, perhaps, the source of Elford's problems with the report's language?

Interested *Commonweal* readers can find out for themselves by requesting a copy of the 60-page report from the School Study Commission (430 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60611).

ED MARCINIAK



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